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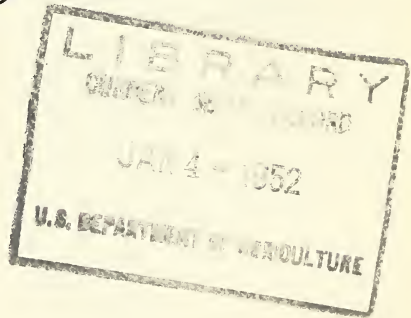
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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



# REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF PERSONNEL, 1951

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,  
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PERSONNEL,  
Washington, D. C., October 1, 1951.

HON. CHARLES F. BRANNAN,  
*Secretary of Agriculture*

DEAR MR. SECRETARY: I respectfully submit the following report on personnel administration in the Department of Agriculture. The period covered is the fiscal year 1951—July 1, 1950, through June 30, 1951.

Sincerely yours,

T. ROY REID, *Director.*

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## THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY

The Korean war outbreak, subsequent United States-United Nations participation in repelling invasion, and the Presidential proclamation of a national emergency December 16, 1950—all of these have affected greatly the activities of the Office of Personnel during the past year.

Maintaining and conducting the many functions, responsibilities, and services of normal times, the Office has given special attention to the program of national defense and preparedness, complementing those efforts in all ways possible. Significant changes in personnel management have materialized as a result of the increased activities and workload and have been felt throughout the Office. Manpower utilization has been especially emphasized. Department and employee work methods have been streamlined for more efficiency, and consolidations of responsibilities have strengthened the organization of bureaus and agencies.

Emergency-inspired legislation has required close study for administration and the many new problems presented.

### ORGANIZATION AND PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

#### Organization Changes

During the past year, the principal organization changes in the Department concerned regionalization of certain activities in the Bureau of Entomology and Plant Quarantine, the extension of regionalization in the Bureau of Agricultural and Industrial Chemistry, and changes occurring as a result of the defense program. For the most part, defense program activities have been absorbed within existing organizations except in the case of the Production and Marketing Administration.

The Department was assigned full responsibility for the defense food program and other responsibilities relating to lumber and farm equipment and fertilizer distribution. Activities are carried on in cooperation with the National Security Resources Board, the Department of Defense and other agencies. With respect to lumber, the Forest Service has established coordinating positions in Washington and its regional offices, but regular employees are carrying out these additional responsibilities. In the Agriculture Research Administration, the resources of existing facilities and technical manpower have been broadly reassigned and redirected, where needed, to defense projects. Two new offices—the Office of Requirements and Allocations, and the Office of Materials and Facilities—have been created for specific defense program purposes within the Production and Marketing Administration. The agency's commodity and other branches, State and county offices, and other field facilities are playing a major role in defense work. Defense coordination responsibilities have been assigned an Assistant Administrator for Program Coordination.

#### Personnel Program Reviews

The personnel management program of the central office of each agency was reviewed during the year and also the major field offices.



These reviews were conducted in offices where personnel authority has been delegated. Better relationships and mutual understanding of problems and objectives continue to result from these surveys.

Workload difficulties hamper the review program since reviews are made by employees of this office along with other regular duties. This lack of manpower resources materially affects attainment of the objectives. As a partial solution to the problem, an extensive training program was instituted to promote the utilization of subject-matter specialists so that they would be qualified to review personnel activities other than their specialties.

### **Incentive Programs**

During the fiscal year the Office of Personnel stressed the importance of incentive programs as a segment of management improvement. Counseling sessions were held with Department agencies to guide and assist them in the application of all phases of the incentive program—cash awards, efficiency awards, honor awards, and step increases for superior accomplishment.

A pamphlet containing a concise analysis of each of the four programs was issued. It included a section entitled "Hints to Supervisors" as a summary to aid bureaus in selecting appropriate awards for specific achievements.

Cash awards for the fiscal year—approximately \$10,000—were considerably increased over previous years and 20 efficiency awards were approved. This is the first year that this type of award has been used so widely. Honor awards and step increases for superior accomplishment were slightly higher this year, also indicating the effectiveness of awards programs.

To expedite handling of cash awards, the Department Management Policy Committee approved further decentralization of authority to make cash awards for suggestions under Public Law 600.

### **Legislation**

Approximately 18 laws—permanent and temporary—directly affecting personnel administration in the Department, were enacted. A few, such as Public Law 535—International Development Act, were approved during the preceding fiscal year, but their full effect was not felt until after July 1, 1950. Some of the laws which gave rise to new policies and procedures were:

Public Law 732, approved August 25, 1950, amended the Hatch Political Activities Act so as to provide for penalties other than removal from office and authorized review and revocation of removals made prior to the amendment.

Public Law 734, approved August 28, 1950, amended the Social Security Act and brought within its provisions certain employees of the Department and its instrumentalities.

Public Law 759, approved September 6, 1950, provided that with certain exceptions, no payment shall be made for annual leave accumulated during the 1950 calendar year and unused at the close of business on June 30, 1951.

Public Law 774, approved September 8, 1950—the Defense Production Act of 1950—authorized temporary employment in grades

16, 17, and 18, permitted employment of persons with outstanding ability without compensation, and provided for fines and imprisonment for employees who use confidential information in commodity speculation.

Public Law 843, approved September 27, 1950, provided a basis for making temporary appointments, placed restrictions on salaries of employees reinstated after separation due to reduction in force, and required that all reinstatements, transfers, or promotions shall be temporary.

Public Law 893, approved September 30, 1950, amended the Classification Act of 1949 so as to provide for the establishment of a new performance rating plan.

### **Revisions of Rules and Regulations**

Behind the 782 pages of instructions issued to agencies during the fiscal year were the laws, Executive orders, decisions, regulations, and policies affecting personnel work in the Department. Many of these were to implement our close participation in the national defense program. The practice of incorporating applicable Civil Service Commission regulations in Department regulations by reference has been continued, resulting in a considerable reduction of the amount of regulatory material otherwise required.

Personnel management policies and regulations governing Department Point IV program participation have been developed to implement the regulations of the Point IV Administrator.

## **EMPLOYMENT**

### **General**

During the emergency, increasing attention is being given to the improvement and simplification of employment methods to assure the most expeditious handling of appointments, placements, and separations at a reduced cost. Regulation appraisal in the light of emergency conditions will permit development of greater flexibility in meeting requirements under changing programs. Curtailment of certain activities poses the problem of reduction in force of career employees with many years service. This problem must be studied further to permit more effective utilization and retention of such well-trained employees whose qualifications represent a substantial investment in training and experience.

Improvement of departmental contacts with the Nation's colleges in recruitment of college graduates is emphasized for the future.

### **Point IV Program Recruitment**

The Point IV Administrator and the State Department have been assisted by this Office in the development of personnel program aspects. On the recommendation of the Joint Committee on Agricultural Services to Foreign Areas, the Office of Personnel was designated by the Civil Service Commission and the Executive Office of the President to establish and maintain a roster of professional agricultural specialists available for foreign assignment in conjunction with



the assistance program to undeveloped areas of the world. The roster resulted largely from a request of land-grant colleges to concentrate and coordinate the agricultural recruitment for specialists in a single office, serving the needs of all Federal and public international agencies requiring the services of professional agriculturists. Various activities and announcements have directed widespread attention to the program in and outside the Department.

### **Interdepartmental Placement**

The Office maintained a member on the Interdepartmental Placement Committee, a voluntary organization of personnel representatives of Federal departments and agencies which attempts to retain in the Federal service well-qualified employees who are affected by reduction in force. This committee assisted the Civil Service Commission in developing a Government-wide placement service. Information concerning employees about to be separated is made available to the other participating agencies so that they may fill vacancies from qualified available personnel with Federal experience.

### **Career Program Development**

The Office of Personnel has concentrated attention on the guiding and aiding of agency career programs based on Department and Civil Service Commission standards. Plans are under way for the individual agency programs to be integrated in a Department-wide career program.

The first steps in this direction were taken this year with agencies being required to consider Department employees first in filling positions at GS-11 or above. A Department-wide placement roster made up of employee applications voluntarily submitted has been developed for consideration in placements, promotions, or reassignments. Agencies have been requested to use this file in filling vacancies before going outside the Department in selecting personnel.

### **Executive Development Program**

An agreement between the Department and the Civil Service Commission made in 1950 has continued to permit the individual agencies to set up their own career-advancement programs within the framework of the Department's executive development program plans approved at that time. Many agencies have plans which have been submitted for approval. The Soil Conservation Service, Production and Marketing Administration, and Rural Electrification Administration have approved programs under way.

### **Employment Examining Program**

Further progress has been made in the civil service examination program through the development of specifications for a number of positions not previously covered. Only a few positions for which the Department has examining responsibility have not yet been covered by appropriate examinations.

Registers of eligibles are available to take care of most recruitment needs of the Department. Operations of the Committee of Expert Examiners and the nine field boards for the Department have been improved so that it is now possible to establish registers more quickly than in the past.

As a result of Executive Order 10180 and the Commission's regulations instrumenting the so-called Whitten amendment—which made many promotions temporary and appointments indefinite and non-status in the civil service—recruitment became more difficult. To obtain the best qualified personnel, requests were made for CSC authority to make probational appointments to a number of Department positions.

### **Probational-Trainee Program**

This student program, which commenced in 1948, permits an agency to train and observe prospective employees during summer vacations. It has provided a valuable source of recruitment and has enabled the Department to obtain the services of several hundred outstanding students upon their graduation. The Soil Conservation Service in the past 3 years has appointed 533 student trainees to permanent positions. About 400 of that number are still with SCS in the capacity of full-fledged professional technicians or as student trainees. The program has proved so worthwhile that SCS plans to expand and improve its operation to gear it more closely with the agency's career recruitment plan.

### **Research-Intern Program**

For the third consecutive year the research-intern program has brought outstanding graduate students into the Department for 1 year or longer assignments to research projects for which academic credit is granted. Developed originally in cooperation with the land-grant colleges, the Secretary's Internship Cooperation Committee and the Graduate School, the number of openings doubled last year, compared with 1950, including 58 internships, 43 sponsoring colleges, and 78 nominations. The program is valuable to the advancement of agricultural research. To date available opportunities have outnumbered the qualified and interested students.

### **Employment Council**

A representative of the Office supplied consultant service to the Department's Employment Council which has assisted this Office in evaluating contemplated policy or procedural changes regarding employment matters before final adoption. The Council is also providing an effective medium for the exchange of information in special recruitment and placement matters.

## **INVESTIGATIONS**

### **Security Clearance**

As the national-mobilization and defense programs were accelerated, the security clearance work of this Office was increased in volume,

with a continuing increase anticipated. Investigations were processed on 1,598 cases. The Department requested special passports for 172 employees for official foreign travel which required clearance, as did the 65 Department-nominated employees for attendance at international conferences. Security checks were made on 361 employees with access to classified material. Also "processed," were those employees designated to serve on interdepartmental committees dealing with national security matters.

In the classified-material category, employee investigations for clearance for access to secret and top secret material numbered 1,086. The Office reviewed and evaluated 352 Federal Bureau of Investigation reports of full field investigations of persons engaged in the Point IV Program, certifying those employees to the Department of State.

### **Loyalty Program**

New appointments and the revision of loyalty standards, which reopened many cases, created a notable increase in loyalty-program work during the past year. The Office continued to perform services for the Department Loyalty Board, maintaining liaison with it, with the Government's Loyalty Review Board, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and with the Department's agencies and employees. Assistance has been rendered by preparing for hearings, by arranging for witness appearances, by location of suitable accommodations for hearings outside Washington, and by attendance of office employees ready to serve the board whenever possible.

During the year 30 reports of full field investigations by the FBI were received and summarized by this Office for use of the Loyalty Board. Supplemental reports were received and handled in the same manner. Sixteen cases previously closed were reopened for Loyalty Review Board reconsideration under the standards revised by Executive Order 10241. Charges, made by letter in 13 cases, resulted in 2 immediate resignations and 8 eventual resignations or separations for administrative reasons not bearing on loyalty. The Office also reviewed 33 Civil Service Commission regional loyalty board reports to determine Department action pending final outcome of these cases.

### **Disciplinary Actions**

Slightly more than 300 disciplinary actions were taken under delegated authority and post-audited by the Office. Results included 100 suspensions, 20 delinquency or misconduct removals of temporary or probational employees, 121 resignations of employees not in good standing, and the issuance of 78 reprimand letters. The Office also processed and reviewed 221 cases submitted for prior approval. Eighty of these were disposed of without disciplinary action and the remainder resulted in 21 suspensions, 14 delinquency or misconduct removals, 28 resignations of employees not in good standing, and 78 letters of reprimand. Service of 18 employees were terminated as a result of derogatory information of a nonloyalty nature disclosed by Civil Service Commission record checks and inquiries in conjunction with the loyalty program or from other sources.



### **Program Investigations**

Seven program investigations to determine violations of laws or regulations or other irregularities connected with the Department's action programs were conducted by this Office during the year. They were usually made as the result of a specific complaint or request.

### **Personnel and Suitability Checks**

For alleged employee misconduct or delinquency, fiscal irregularities, misuse of Government-owned vehicles, excessive use of intoxicants, and improper outside activities, the Office made 44 personnel investigations. Fifty-nine suitability investigations were made to ascertain whether or not the persons were acceptable for employment in the Department, or if employed, whether or not they should be retained.

### **Veteran Appeals**

In cases arising under section 14 of the Veterans Preference Act, this Office continued to represent the Department in appeals proceedings before the Civil Service Commission. Cases on appeals were prepared and evidence presented at hearings. Two such appeals were filed during the year at the regional office level, and one further appeal was made to the Commission's Board of Appeals and Review. In each case, the Department action was sustained.

## **CLASSIFICATION**

### **Defense Production Act**

The passage of the Defense Production Act placed new responsibilities on the Office in that it provided for additional grade GS-16, 17, and 18 positions in connection with the defense production responsibilities of the Department. As a result of a complete survey of the Department's defense activities, recommendations to the Civil Service Commission were made for the allocation of 29 positions in these new grades. The Civil Service Commission and the President approved 22 of these recommendations. Other key positions have been created since as a result of increased defense activities in the Department.

### **Survey of Positions in Grades GS-16, 17, and 18**

During the latter part of the year, the Civil Service Commission and the Bureau of the Budget, at the request of the President, inaugurated a Government-wide survey to determine the number of positions in grades GS-16, 17, and 18, necessary to adequately staff the various departments and agencies. On the basis of a Department survey conducted by this Office, the Secretary recommended 157 positions in these grades to the Civil Service Commission.

### **Delegated Classification Authority**

Additional authority was delegated to bureaus in allocating positions up to and including grade GS-13. As a result of this action,

the number of allocations by the central office decreased to something less than 1,000 key positions. As the delegation of authority has increased, staff responsibilities of the Office have become more significant. A great deal of time has been spent negotiating with the bureaus, keeping familiar with their current and planned activities, and advising them in allocations matters.

During the year, a complete revision of the administrative regulations regarding position allocation was issued.

### **Classification Responsibility**

As a result of regulations prepared by this Office during the past year, the majority of Department bureaus and agencies have issued policy statements placing joint responsibility on employees, supervisors, and personnel technicians for keeping agency allocations current. Most agencies continue to follow a post-audit procedure which insures that significant changes in work assignments are reflected in current descriptions of positions, thus assuring, throughout the Department, that the congressional mandate of equal pay for substantially equal work is recognized and followed.

### **Post-Audit Program**

The classification post-audit program of the Civil Service Commission showed increased activity during the year. It made 14 post-audits of Department field offices and four post-audits of bureau headquarters in Washington. Our staff members made several field trips to assist bureaus in negotiating over differences with the Civil Service Commission as a result of post-audit findings. Considerable time was also spent with the Commission headquarters office here in settling differences regarding the allocations of individual positions or groups of positions. In every instance, there was disagreement on only a small percentage of the positions audited.

### **Classification in a Nutshell**

A pamphlet, charts, and film strip entitled, "Classification in a Nutshell," were developed during the year to improve employee understanding of the classification system. It has received Government-wide recognition. Arrangements have been made by the Federal Personnel Council and the Civil Service Commission for reprinting and distributing this material to other Government departments. Our staff members held many meetings with other Government agencies to present either the visual aid versions on film and charts or to discuss the booklet. In addition to the wide distribution made by the Department, at the close of the year approximately 28,000 copies were on order by other departments and independent agencies.

### **Job Specifications**

Working with the Civil Service Commission, 22 series of job specifications were developed during the year. Considerable attention was given departmental specifications for the activities of market news reporters. As in past years, bureaus and agencies organized program



and administrative committees to assist this Office in reviewing specifications prepared by the Civil Service Commission for the purpose of suggesting changes and revisions.

### **Personnel Conversion to Point IV**

Information was prepared and issued during the year to guide bureaus in converting assigned regular personnel to Point IV classes and pay ranges. Staffing patterns for most of the countries in the Western Hemisphere were approved and positions were allocated under the Point IV salary plan.

### **Foreign and Territorial Differentials**

During the year significant changes were proposed in the administration and determination of foreign and territorial employment differentials. Reports and recommendations setting forth the Department's views were prepared and submitted to the Bureau of the Budget, the State Department, and interested committees of Congress.

### **Wage Stabilization**

In January 1951, the Wage Stabilization Board issued regulations stabilizing Government salaries other than those covered by the 1949 Classification Act. Since then, much attention has been given to wage-stabilization problems and much time to conferences with Board officials in our efforts to develop and issue adequate regulations for Department bureaus and agencies.

Authority has been requested by the Department to manage wage problems without prior approval of the Wage Stabilization Board, and to pay prevailing wages as authorized by section 202 (7) of the 1949 Classification Act. This request has not yet been acted upon.

### **Overtime Regulations**

In accordance with the provisions of Public Law 735, Eighty-first Congress, the Office prepared and issued regulations covering overtime for import and export inspectors.

## **TRAINING**

### **National Training Conference**

A National Training Conference held in June 1951, at Woodberry Forest School, Virginia, brought 60 program, administrative, and training officials from throughout the Nation together for an intensive study of current Department problems relating to management and training. Especially emphasized were considerations of the President's statement of policy on manpower mobilization and the Secretary's memorandum tying better utilization of employees to improved performance of supervisors. More than 65 recommendations to improve training in the Department resulted from the Conference.

## **Training Officers Manual**

Training for persons transferring to staff jobs under the Executive Development Program has been planned by this Office. An increasing amount of time will be devoted to this phase of training since turn-over will continue to be high in this field during the emergency. The Department policy to usually promote employees from operating positions to staff jobs increases such turn-over, making selection difficult and training more essential. To provide effective guides for aiding staff people in their training work in the Department, the Office started a Training Officers Manual.

### **Administrative Management Training**

This Office continued to assist the Administrative Management Training Committee, appointed by the Secretary, in its efforts to develop practical methods for training employees in the various phases of administrative management. Selected personnel in the various staff offices presented specialized subject matter to the first groups that received this training, and it was believed later that much of this could be done by group members themselves under competent leadership. A 2-weeks' experimental session, held to determine whether or not a group could conduct its own training discussions, revealed that about 50 percent of the subject matter should be presented by qualified outside experts. A "pilot" course for field people was held in Philadelphia and as a result a request was made for similar training courses in Chicago. The USDA Club there, with a minimum of aid from Washington, demonstrated that a local group could initiate, organize, and conduct this type of training.

As a result of these experiences, a training institute was held at Denver and 28 representative leaders from 10 agencies in 20 cities of the Western States attended. Training patterns developed over a 3-year period were discussed with them and this group formulated practical plans whereby each member could return to his own area and conduct sessions in administrative management training for employees in the area. Plans are now under way by local groups in 12 western cities to hold such training sessions and to provide for its further extension to other areas. The Secretary's committee has recommended that an institute similar to that held in Denver also be held in Atlanta for representatives from the Eastern States.

During normal periods, training constitutes an important method for improving management in the Department, but in light of the President's mobilization policy statement of January 17, 1951, it becomes especially important and significant as a means to provide for more fully utilizing our manpower resources.

### **Training of Supervisors**

This Office and the agencies have placed emphasis on new and important developments for the effective selection of supervisors and the improvement of supervisory skills. One of these is a method known as the Career Development Guide and another is a loose-leaf

manual entitled, "Guide Posts for Supervisors" which was compiled to assist supervisors in understanding their responsibilities for self-improvement, career development, and supervisory training.

A Secretary's memorandum was issued which stressed the importance of first line supervisory training and placed responsibility with this Office for planning and administering such a program. Subsequently, a guide was issued for use by the agencies, entitled "Tentative Standards for Appraising Supervisory Performance," designed to establish a uniform method for evaluating and rating performance of supervisors.

The President's mobilization policy statement and a joint memorandum issued by the Civil Service Commission and the Bureau of the Budget stressed the need for increased emphasis on supervisory training. As a result, the Department's agencies are giving more attention to such programs. The Meat Inspection Division of the Bureau of Animal Industry completed its second series of supervisory training sessions and has plans to set up seven field trainee jobs to develop employees for supervisory positions in the division; the Production and Marketing Administration has conducted training courses for supervisory officials; and, the Bureau of Agricultural and Industrial Chemistry, the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, the Soil Conservation Service, the Forest Service, and other agencies in the Department have programs for the orderly selection and development of employees to prepare them for more important job assignments.

Because much of the Department work depends upon effective communications, this Office published a new and well illustrated booklet entitled, "Letters—A Guide for Improving Them." Emphasis has also been continued on the training of employees to prepare all written materials in a more readable form. Special training in rapid reading, which has a good start in the Department, is also being given to more and more employees whose assignments require them to do a great deal of reading.

### **Secretarial Training Guides**

A secretarial training group, sponsored by the Office, has worked on problems during the year which arise due to the rapid turn-over in this type of personnel. Because of the large number of isolated field offices throughout the country which require only one or two clerical workers, many self-teaching devices have been developed. Among these is a Secretarial Training Guide which has been published recently to meet this need. It is supplemented by Department-wide distribution of the new Civil Service Commission publication on Utilization of Clerical Workers.

### **Orientation**

It has been a belief of the Office of Personnel that new and old employees, well informed about the work of their own and related agencies, will serve the public in a more effective and courteous manner. To help them recognize the importance of their duties in the over-all picture, assistance is given in acquainting employees as early as possible with their responsibilities. Special attention to such orientation is prompted by the emergency with its increase in turn-over of per-



sonnel. Though most orientation responsibility rests with the agencies, this Office provides technical assistance. Visual aids, developed during the past few years, help the agencies with their new-employee-orientation program.

In Washington, employee orientation meetings are conducted by this Office providing examples for agencies to follow in conducting their own orientation work. Employees are also provided with helpful informational material through the Department's house organ, USDA.

The Employee Handbook, which is distributed to each new Department employee, was revised during the year to incorporate changes in both policy and informational material.

### **Joint Relationships With the Colleges**

The Fourth Biennial Personnel Management Meeting recommended that training of employees on joint Federal-State programs be made a part of the plans for administering Federal funds for such projects. Consequently, the Committee on Training for Government Service, composed of representatives from the land-grant colleges and the Department, is developing recommendations on how this should be done. The committee has recommended legislation to provide for the orderly exchange of employees between the Department and the colleges. Such legislation would give selected employees added opportunity for basic or refresher education, and would materially assist the Department's work in detailing employees to educational institutions and laboratories for training in skills and knowledge needed for effective operation.

### **USDA Clubs**

The Office of Personnel services 84 USDA clubs throughout the country, providing employee groups in the various localities with needed assistance. Club information is exchanged so that one club may know of the activities of similar organizations elsewhere. Speakers and assistance on projects are provided whenever possible to enable these people to serve themselves and improve their service to the public through closer liaison with the Department and the work of its agencies.

During the year, employees of the Bureau of Entomology and Plant Quarantine assumed leadership and have taken cooperative action with other Department employees to organize a new USDA Club at Greenfield, Mass.

## **PERSONNEL RELATIONS AND SAFETY**

### **Employee Services**

Car pooling, housing, and other employee services, such as those created in World War II, may become necessary with the present emergency. This Office, together with agency personnel offices, is watching the situation to determine when these services should be renewed. A housing service for metropolitan Washington employees has been revived, and the Bureau of Human Nutrition and Home Economics is cooperating in the revision of a pamphlet for newcomers

which contains information on living conditions and costs in Washington, D. C.

The administrative regulations were revised last year to furnish more complete information to field offices about forming and operating employee clubs and groups, and regarding the distribution of material to employees.

### **Employee Council**

During the first year of its operation, the Employee Council, composed of elected employee representatives, made recommendations to the Director of Personnel on 11 subjects. These recommendations have indicated employee attitude on such matters as performance ratings, employee appeals, promotion-from-within, safety, pay, and leave. Many of the Council's recommendations on performance ratings were included in the Department plan. Council participation is serving as a sounding board in developing personnel policies. A number of agencies have set up subcouncils which serve as liaison between the employees and the management offices.

### **Performance Rating**

The old efficiency rating plan was superseded by the Performance Rating Act of 1950 which became effective during the year. It established plans for the evaluation of employee work performance in each Government department and permitted the three ratings of "satisfactory," "unsatisfactory," and "outstanding." Only exceptional cases receive an "outstanding" rating after review and approval by an Efficiency Awards Committee. Warning to employees, prior to receipt of the "unsatisfactory" rating, is required.

The Civil Service Commission approved the plan proposed by USDA for the establishment of employee performance requirements and standards. The plan provides for information to employees on work standards, periodic work appraisal, improvement of performance to meet standards, and improvement of supervisor-employee relationships to increase mutual understanding of the amount, kind, and methods of satisfactory work expected.

### **Fair Employment**

This Office continued to assist the Department's fair employment officer in operating the fair employment program. Regulations have been revised to conform with those of the Fair Employment Board of the Civil Service Commission. The most recent outstanding addition was the granting of appeal rights to organizations and groups.

At the request of the fair employment officer, the Office of Personnel has included the fair employment program in reviews of Department agency personnel management activities.

### **Civil Defense**

A civil defense organization for the Department's Washington buildings and employees was established during the year. Responsibility for operation of the organization is shared by the Office of Per-



sonnel, the Office of Plant and Operations, and the Office of Budget and Finance, under the direction of the Assistant Secretary.

This Office is directly responsible for the first-aid training of personnel and other civil defense training activities. Programs are under way to accomplish those ends.

### **Safety**

Educational work on safety increased during the year. This Office, working with the Department's Safety Council, initiated a monthly series of posters called Safety Hints. Articles prepared for Department news bulletins and publications, together with other reports, releases, statistical summaries, and safety-caution inclusions in all technical publications, kept a steady flow of safety information before employees.

The USDA Safety Council continued to coordinate Department participation in existing farm safety programs, such as Spring Clean-up Week, National Farm Safety Week, and National Fire Prevention Week. The National Farm Safety Week program was conducted by a special committee in cooperation with the National Safety Council. Regular monthly meetings were held throughout the year to keep up agency interest in employee and farm safety by acquainting representatives with current safety developments.

A form designed to improve and simplify accident reporting by combining several forms now in use has been developed by the Office and has been submitted to the Safety Council for endorsement.

### **Worker Fatalities**

During the fiscal year, 25 Department employees suffered fatal injuries from accidents while on the job or on official business for the Government. Six of these deaths occurred in the crash of a commercial airplane. Other accidental deaths resulted from motor-vehicle accidents and considerable safety effort has been directed to curtail this cause of loss. In addition to the Department's loss of employees due to fatal accidents, heart attacks were a principal cause of other deaths on the job.

## **EMPLOYEE HEALTH**

### **Health Service**

The health units of the Department continued to give service to employees, and in the Washington metropolitan area, a total of 20,455 calls were made. The usual preemployment examinations, numbering 459, and 23 disability retirement examinations were performed. Cases from the field were referred to this Office for advice concerning employability of applicants, disability retirements, and other varied medical problems.

### **Blood Recruitment**

The Office aided materially in the cooperative effort of the American Red Cross to obtain blood for present and future emergency purposes. During the year, 798 donations were made by employees in Washing-

ton, and an additional 176 pints were donated by employees at the Beltsville, Md., Agricultural Research Center. A continuing program has been under way to stimulate employee participation.

### **Diabetes-Detection Survey**

As a part of the Department's preventive health program, the diabetes-detection survey which was started in June last year was continued to completion. The small percentage of positive cases discovered were referred to private physicians for treatment.

### **Chest X-rays**

In cooperation with the United States Public Health Service, the District of Columbia Health Service, and the District of Columbia Tuberculosis Association, a chest X-ray, primarily for the detection of pulmonary tuberculosis but also of use in detecting other pulmonary pathology, was offered to all of the Department employees here. About 75 percent of the employees availed themselves of the opportunity. A few cases of active tuberculosis were discovered and referrals made for treatment. One case of unsuspected cancer of the lungs was detected and 26 cases of cardiac pathology were discovered by X-ray. Each case was further examined in the health unit where the employee was notified of the findings and assisted in obtaining treatment.

### **Cancer Film**

The educational part of the preventive medical program carried on by the Office is mainly in the individual contacts with employees by the medical and nursing personnel. Another way of reaching employees is through the media of motion pictures. In this connection, several showings of a film dealing with the early detection of cancer were well attended by employees.



